

## Claims

1. A communications system comprising of an information processing apparatus and an information management apparatus managing contents, in which:

5        said information processing apparatus includes:

              playing means playing content provided from said information management apparatus via a network;

10      first request means requesting said information management apparatus to store a time stamp and predetermined identification information in association when it is instructed, while said content is played by said playing means, that the time stamp representing the playing position at that moment be stored; and

15      second request means notifying said information management apparatus of said identification information and requesting the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp, and

20      is characterized in that:

              said playing means plays said content from said position represented by said time stamp provided from said information management apparatus in accordance with the request by said second request means,

25      and

              said information management apparatus includes:

              providing means providing said content to said information processing apparatus via said network; and

              storing means storing said time stamp

and said identification information in association in accordance with the request from said information processing apparatus, and

is characterized in that:

5           said providing means provides said content from the position represented by said time stamp when, from said information processing apparatus, said identification information is notified and the playing of said content from the position represented by said time  
10          stamp stored by said storing means is requested.

2.         A communications method in a communication system comprising of an information processing apparatus and an information management apparatus managing contents, in  
15          which:

              an information processing method of said information processing apparatus  
              comprises:

20          a playing step of playing content provided from said information management apparatus via a network;

              a first request step of requesting said information management apparatus to store a time stamp and predetermined identification information in  
25          association when it is instructed, while said content is played by the process of said playing step, that the time stamp representing the playing position at that moment be stored; and

              a second request step of notifying said information management apparatus of said identification information and requesting the playing of said content

from the position represented by said time stamp, and  
is characterized in that:

said content from the position  
represented by said time stamp provided from said  
5 information management apparatus in accordance with the  
request by the process of said second request step is  
played by the process of said playing step, and  
an information management method of said  
information management apparatus

10 comprises:

a providing step of providing said  
content to said information processing apparatus via said  
network; and

15 a storing step of storing a time stamp  
and identification information in association in  
accordance with the request from said information  
processing apparatus, and

is characterized in that:

20 said content is provided by the process  
of said providing step from a position represented by  
said time stamp when, from said information processing  
apparatus, said identification information is notified  
and the playing of said content from the position  
represented by said time stamp stored by the process of  
25 said storing step is requested.

3. An information processing apparatus,  
characterized by having:

30 playing means playing content provided from  
an information management apparatus managing said content  
via a network;

first request means requesting said information management apparatus to store a time stamp and predetermined identification information in association when it is instructed, while said content is 5 played by said playing means, that said time stamp representing a playing position at that moment be stored; and

second request means notifying said information management apparatus of said identification 10 information and requesting the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp, and characterized in that:

said playing means plays said content from said position represented by said time stamp provided 15 from said information management apparatus in accordance with the request by said second request means.

4. The information processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 3, characterized in that:

20 in a case where storage of said time stamp is instructed when it is instructed that the playing of said content be stopped, said first request means may request the information management apparatus to stop providing said content as well as to store said time stamp.

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5. The information processing apparatus as claimed in Claim 3, characterized in that:

said identification information is information allotted to each user.

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6. The information processing apparatus as claimed in

Claim 3,

characterized by further having third request means requesting a viewing status information management apparatus that manages viewing status information to  
5 store viewing status information representing a viewing status of said content, and

characterized in that said second request means requests the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp in accordance with said  
10 viewing status represented by said viewing status information.

7. An information processing method,  
characterized by including:

15 a playing step of playing content provided from said information management apparatus via a network;  
a first request step of requesting said information management apparatus to store a time stamp and predetermined identification information in  
20 association when it is instructed, while said content is played by the process of said playing step, that the time stamp representing the playing position at that moment be stored; and

25 a second request step of notifying said information management apparatus of said identification information and requesting the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp, and  
characterized in that:

30 said content from the position represented by said time stamp provided from said information management apparatus in accordance with the request by the process

of said second request step is played by the process of said playing step.

8. A recording medium having recorded therein a  
5 computer readable program, said program:

characterized by including:

a playing step of playing content provided from said information management apparatus via a network;

10 a first request step of requesting said information management apparatus to store a time stamp and predetermined identification information in association when it is instructed, while said content is played by the process of said playing step, that the time stamp representing the playing position at that moment be  
15 stored; and

a second request step of notifying said information management apparatus of said identification information and requesting the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp, and

20 characterized in that:

said content from the position represented by said time stamp provided from said information management apparatus in accordance with the request by the process of said second request step is played by the process of  
25 said playing step.

9. A program to be executed by a computer,  
characterized by including:

30 a playing step of playing content provided from said information management apparatus via a network;  
a first request step of requesting said

information management apparatus to store a time stamp and predetermined identification information in association when it is instructed, while said content is played by the process of said playing step, that the time 5 stamp representing the playing position at that moment be stored; and

a second request step of notifying said information management apparatus of said identification information and requesting the playing of said content 10 from the position represented by said time stamp, and characterized in that:

said content from the position represented by said time stamp provided from said information management apparatus in accordance with the request by the process 15 of said second request step is played by the process of said playing step.

10. An information management apparatus,  
characterized by including:

20 providing means providing via a network predetermined content to an information processing apparatus that is connected via said network; and

25 storing means storing a time stamp, which represents a playing position for said content provided by said providing means, and predetermined identification information in association in accordance with a request from said information processing apparatus, and characterized in that:

30 said providing means provides said content from the position represented by said time stamp when, from said information processing apparatus, said

identification information is notified and the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp stored by said storing means is requested.

5 11. The information management apparatus as claimed in  
Claim 10,

characterized by further including viewing status information storing means storing viewing status information, which represents a viewing status of said  
10 content, in accordance with a request from said information processing apparatus, and

characterized in that, in a case where said viewing status represented by said viewing status information stored by said viewing status information storing means indicates that said content has not been played to the end, said providing means provides said content from the  
15 position represented by said time stamp.

12. An information management method,

20 characterized by including:

a providing step of providing via a network predetermined content to an information processing apparatus that is connected via the network, and

a storing step of storing a time stamp, which  
25 represents a playing position for said content provided by the process of said providing step, and predetermined identification information in association in accordance with a request from said information processing apparatus, and

30 characterized in that:

said content is provided by the process of

said providing step from a position represented by said time stamp when, from said information processing apparatus, said identification information is notified and the playing of said content from the position  
5 represented by said time stamp stored by the process of said storing step is requested.

13. A recording medium having recorded therein a computer readable program,

10 characterized by including:

a providing step of providing via a network predetermined content to an information processing apparatus that is connected via the network; and

15 a storing step of storing a time stamp, which represents a playing position for said content provided by the process of said providing step, and predetermined identification information in association in accordance with a request from said information processing apparatus, and

20 characterized in that:

25 said content is provided by the process of said providing step from a position represented by said time stamp when, from said information processing apparatus, said identification information is notified and the playing of said content from the position represented by said time stamp stored by the process of said storing step is requested.

14. A program to be executed by a computer,

30 characterized by including:

a providing step of providing via a network

predetermined content to an information processing apparatus that is connected via the network; and

a storing step of storing a time stamp, which represents a playing position for said content provided by the process of said providing step, and predetermined identification information in association in accordance with a request from said information processing apparatus, and

characterized in that:

10           said content is provided by the process of said providing step from a position represented by said time stamp when, from said information processing apparatus, said identification information is notified and the playing of said content from the position  
15           represented by said time stamp stored by the process of said storing step is requested.